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The United States Capitol Dominates the Downtown Washington Scene—Crowning old Jenkins Hill, the Nation's Number One legislative building (Bulletin No. 1) stands 375 feet above Potomac River level. The Mall, stretching from the west side of the Capitol, gives a clear view of the Washington Monument. Centered are the National Gallery of Art, National Museum, and "Federal Triangle" of Government departments. The Capitol itself is almost a city. Miles of corridors are lined with committee and office rooms, exhibit halls, administrative quarters, and restaurants, barbershops, ticket and banking offices for convenience of Congress.

of fifteen projected panels. His scenes took the American story from the "Landing of Columbus, 1492" to "Penn's Treaty with the Indians, 1682."

Brumidi's successor, another fresco artist, Filippo Costaggini, completed the other eight sections, using the original artist's sketches. This brought the historic and geographic cavalcade to "Gold Is Discovered in California, 1848."

When the designs were carried out, however, they failed to fill the available space by thirty feet. The unsightly gap remained until Allyn Cox finished the task in 1953 with three panels marking the "Civil War," "Spanish-American War," and the "Birth of Aviation . . . 1903."

Since those who followed Brumidi painstakingly matched his style, the whole frieze has artistic continuity. It also gleams throughout its eighteen panels—the result of a general washing and touching up.

Capitol Work Never Done—Next work season, other art treasures of the Capitol will come in for special attention, along with the routine, never-ending housekeeping chores. The building has 435 rooms, so it keeps an army of workmen busy.

Each year, between Congressional sessions, the Nation's Number One legislative building (illustration, cover) is cleaned, polished, and repaired. Sometimes extensive reconstruction work is needed.

Such maintenance and structural care are responsibilities of the Capitol Architect, whose boss is Congress. The 1949-51 program, involving the remodeling of both Senate and House Chambers, was the biggest job done on the building since the dome was completed in 1865.

Better Radio, TV Facilities—During the recess period just ended, more and better facilities for radio and television were provided in the Senate Gallery and also in the subbasement on the Senate side.

The Gallery's radio and TV area assigned commentators in these fields was partitioned and soundproofed for special programs and interviews with Senators.

An incinerator was installed in 1953 to burn secret documents. A new ice plant to supply Capitol water coolers replaced the old one under the steps leading to the House wing. And three more statues of distinguished State citizens joined the collection in Statuary Hall. Two from Oregon honored Dr. John McLoughlin, early settler, and the Reverend Jason Lee, pioneer Methodist missionary. Washington State's choice was also a missionary, Dr. Marcus Whitman.

References—The U. S. Capitol and other important government buildings may be located on the National Geographic Society's Pocket Map of Central Washington. Write the Society's headquarters, Washington 6, D. C., for a price list of maps.

For further information, see "U. S. Capitol, Citadel of Democracy," in *The National Geographic Magazine* for August, 1952; "Washington: Home of the Nation's Great," June, 1947; and numerous other articles listed under "Washington, D. C.," in the *Cumulative Index to the National Geographic Magazine. (Issues of The Magazine not more than 12 months old are available to schools and libraries at a specially discounted price of 50¢ a copy. Earlier issues sell for 65¢ a copy through 1946; $1.00, 1930-1945; $2.00, 1912-1929. Write for prices of issues prior to 1912.)*

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, April 13, 1953, "Nation's Capitol Once Ugly and Shunned"; and "Cherry Trees Lure Thousands to Washington," April 7, 1952.

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UMI

B. ANTHONY STEWART AND JOHN E. FLETCHER

Capitol Pages Go to School While They Work—College-preparatory courses are taught in a congressionally-sponsored school started in 1927. After classes, held from 6:15 to 10:25 a.m., the pages take up their duties of distributing documents and running errands for Congress. The boys, selected by their Congressmen, range from fourteen to eighteen, and come from all over the United States.

Bulletin No. 1, January 18, 1954

Congress Finds Capitol Refurbished

Members of the 83rd Congress, back in Washington for a new session, find numerous improvements and embellishments acquired by the Capitol during their absence. Among pleasing sights that greeted them were three new panels completing the encircling frieze in the famed Rotunda.

For almost three-quarters of a century a blank space had marred the impressiveness of this frieze, begun in 1877 by the talented artist, Constantine Brumidi, to depict dramatic moments in the Nation's progress.

Artist's Last Work—Brumidi, an Italian emigré who came to the United States seeking political sanctuary, spent twenty-five years decorating the Capitol. His subjects were astonishingly numerous and varied, ranging from minute medallions to the monumental dome. Proudly he signed one of his paintings "Citizen of the U.S."

His last work was the Rotunda frieze, created in true fresco, one of the most difficult of art forms. In this process, water-mixed paints are applied to freshly laid, still-wet plaster, which, when hardened, presents a sparkling, durable, and marblelike effect.

At the time of his death in 1880, Brumidi was working on the seventh

tactic of infiltrating agents to aid the few pro-communist groups there.

Thailand Still a Symbol—Despite the present situation, many people in Western nations still think of Thailand as a precious symbol of the pomp, glitter, romance, and mystery associated with the Far East of old.

This is the land of *Anna and the King of Siam*, whose ruler's traditional title is "Lord of Life and Possessor of 24 Golden Umbrellas."

Sometimes it is called "The Land of the White Elephant" because the mighty beast is considered sacred there. Occasionally it is referred to as "Land of the Yellow Robe," the distinctive attire of the numerous Buddhist priests visitors seem to encounter everywhere.

The nation's artistic traditions are reflected in the splendor of the many temples which ornament the country. In the temples, too, one finds expression of the people's love of dance and music. Thai temple dancers have long been noted for stately grace and sense of rhythm.

Naturally cheerful, the average Thai doesn't fret at the possibility of being overrun by communist forces. He'll probably tell you that Thais have befuddled would-be conquerors before.

References—Thailand is shown on the Society's maps of The Far East, Southeast Asia, and Asia and Adjacent Areas.

For additional information, see "Pageantry of the Siamese Stage" and "Scintillating Siam," in *The National Geographic Magazine*, February, 1947; "'Land of the Free' in Asia," May, 1934; and, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, December 8, 1952, "Thai Prosperity Lightens Dark Asian Scene"; "U. S. Arms Scheduled for Thailand," November 27, 1950; and "Siam Is Set for Returned King's Coronation," April 24, 1950.

A Barefoot Egg Seller Encourages Trade with a Smile—In a Thailand market, paper umbrellas cast circles of shade, supplementing the shelter of the roofed buildings. Cloth and meat are sold inside; eggs, fish, and vegetables out in the open space.

W. ROBERT MOORE

Bulletin No. 2, January 18, 1954

Thailand Guards Against Red Threat

Thailand, key piece in southeast Asia's jigsaw puzzle, is warily watching for the next move of the communist troops who drove to its eastern frontier after cutting across the narrow waist of Indochina.

This is the first time in the long conflict between French-Indochina forces and the Chinese-supported Red aggressors that military operations have come so close to the nation.

Free Spirit Strong—The tradition of independence is ancient and strong in this land. Its people speak of it as Muang Thai, "Land of the Free," and they are proud to designate themselves Thais—free men.

Alone of United Nations members in continental Asia, Thailand sent combat troops to Korea to join the UN armies there. Only a battalion could be spared from its small army, but it was kept at full strength. Thai casualties were 615, a high figure for the size of the contingent.

It is an odd twist of history that the Thais, after fighting communists along Korea's much-publicized 38th parallel of latitude, now are virtually face to face with them at the 18th parallel.

The Red spearheads reached the Mekong, the river separating Thailand and Indochina, opposite one of the four natural regions into which the free nation is divided. This section is mostly a high plain where raising livestock is the main pursuit. There are some forests.

Most of the country's 19,000,000 people live in the flat central plain section, devoted largely to rice fields. Crops of this Oriental staff of life are usually so good that big surpluses are available for export.

The northwest region is heavily forested and mountainous. The southernmost section which snakes deep into the Malay Peninsula is mostly jungle but yields some rubber, tin, and tungsten.

Thailand, still called Siam by many Europeans, covers 197,659 square miles, about three-quarters the area of Texas, and has its capital at Bangkok (Krung Thep), a city of almost 900,000.

Krung Thep may be translated loosely as "Divine New Capital." The old one was Ayutthaya. This name change is eloquent of the people's independent spirit, officially expressed in 1949 when the nation reverted to its old name, Country of the Thais, or Thailand.

Bangkok, which is becoming the big air-travel hub in southeast Asia, is a mixture of old and modern. It has been dubbed the "Venice of the East" because it is laced with canals, and many citizens dwell on boats along its water front. The city's newer part has many solidly built structures which show the influence of Western architecture.

The country's five universities are located in the city. All children must attend school between the ages of seven and fourteen. About 3,000,000 were enrolled at last count.

A Thai worry is the large number of Chinese who have settled in the land and own many businesses. Some estimates put their total over 1,000,000. Although no hostile Red move appears immediate, the Mekong area is under martial law and defenses have been reinforced. Thai leaders think that the proximity of Red units favors the furtive communist

previous assaults; 22,650-foot Panch Chuli, and 23,410-foot Nunkun.

There still remains the challenge of the new unscaled king Mt. Godwin Austen (K-2), world's second-highest mountain whose treacherous, blizzard-lashed sides guard the way to a 28,250-foot peak.

Thousands of miles from the Himalayas, the record-breaking sea descent was made off Italy's Ponza Island in the Tyrrhenian Sea. Using a new diving box called a bathyscafe, two scientists went down 10,330 feet, making smithereens of a thirty-day-old record of less than 7,000 feet.

A French cave explorer took the blue ribbon for exploring nature's deep twisting catacombs. He worked his dangerous way almost 2,400 feet below the earth's surface in the Lépineux Cavern in the Pyrenees on the Franco-Spanish frontier (illustration, back cover).

Space Missiles Studied—Extensive attention was given in 1953 to research on the origin and composition of cosmic rays, those mysterious tiny particles of matter which continuously bombard the earth from the star-strewn vastness around it.

At Aligarh, India; atop Bolivia's 18,000-foot Mt. Chacaltaya; in the Wrangell Mountains of Alaska; off Baffin Island in the Canadian Arctic, and in the Pacific waters off South America, physicists compiled new data on these energy-packed rays which travel at enormous speeds.

Evidence of heavier celestial bombardment was the discovery of a water-filled crater in northern Labrador. This scar, 185 yards across, may prove a "baby brother" to the much larger Chubb Crater in the subarctic Ungava area of Quebec Province. The impact of a falling meteor could have gouged out both depressions untold centuries ago.

"Lost Continents" Sought Anew—Clues were sought as to whether there might be two lost continents.

One theory was that Africa may have been once linked with Asia by a southern continent stretching over what is now the northwest part of the Indian Ocean. The other was whether a great land mass in the past joined Australia, New Guinea, and some 200 islands in the South Pacific.

In the frozen north more than 30 expeditions worked on arctic and subarctic problems. In the jungles of Panama one of the world's last "forbidden lands"—the Choco Indian country of Darien—came in for scientists' attention. The little-known area of New Guinea at the Sepik River headwaters was investigated, and the first comprehensive survey was made of flora and fauna in the Papua section of this island.

History's biggest water meter was devised to measure the Gulf Stream's flow through the Straits of Florida. Average flow: More than seven billion gallons per second, or enough to fill 100 million bathtubs.

A seemingly endless variety of plants, insects, and animals came in for attention. One intriguing project under way in the Sahara is a twelve-month study of the camel by four scientists from North Carolina.

But even more intriguing is the unique mission of German scientists to India. They want to learn whether it is true that elephants never forget. The world should find their report of utmost interest.

References—Regions where recent discoveries have been made may be located on the Society's World Map.

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Everest's Conquerors Near Their Goal—Sir Edmund Hillary and the Sherpa guide, Tensing Norkey, pause before their last perilous assault on the top of Mt. Everest. By coincidence, on December 30, the same day that Queen Elizabeth, on her global tour, visited Papakura, Hillary's New Zealand home town, President Gilbert Grosvenor of the National Geographic Society announced that the Society had bestowed on the Everest expedition its Hubbard Medal, one of world geography's highest awards.

Bulletin No. 3, January 18, 1954

Explorers Challenged by 1953's Feats

Daring explorers and venturesome scientists throughout the world have strenuous work cut out for them in 1954 if they are to match the glittering array of achievements which marked the past year.

Mighty Everest was conquered. Man made a record descent of almost two miles in the sea. He also penetrated into the mysterious caverns beneath the land to the greatest depth yet, close to half a mile. New knowledge was extracted from the reaches of outer space.

Plenty of challenges remain, however, to test those who seek this year to add to mankind's accomplishments.

Coronation Present—Most spectacular of 1953's feats was the success of a British expedition in reaching the 29,002-foot summit of Mt. Everest. Much drama attended the exploit. It made a stirring present for Queen Elizabeth II a few days before her coronation on June 2. The globe's highest mountain had finally been overcome, after routing ten expeditions in this century with a loss of sixteen lives.

Like this monarch of the Himalayas, other princes of its ranges also were subdued for the first time—the formidable peak of 26,660-foot Nanga Parbat, the "mountain of death," which had taken thirty-one lives in

An unusual development in recent months has been Russia's reappearance as a large gold seller in the European market after an extended absence. Twenty tons arrived in London from Moscow in December alone.

Availability of Russian gold has been forcing down the metal's price in the so-called "free markets." The United States has pegged the price of gold at $35 an ounce for official international transactions. Hoarders and others who use the unregulated free markets have been gladly paying more for the scarce metal.

Outside the Iron Curtain no one knows definitely the amount of gold held by the Soviet Union or what the Kremlin plans to do with it. London financial circles believe, however, that the current outflow results from the Russians' need to buy from Western nations consumer goods to ease their low standard of living.

In the past decade science has acquired the Midas touch and achieved the goal of the alchemists—changing other metals to gold. Experts say the money markets have nothing to worry about on this score. The Atomic Energy Commission agrees that physicists have changed mercury into gold, but on too small and costly a scale to have any effect on the world supply.

References—For further information on gold, see "Along the Yukon Trail," in *The National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1953; "White Magic in the Belgian Congo," March, 1952; "Busy Fairbanks Sets Alaska's Pace," October, 1949; for additional information on aerial transport, see "Aviation Looks Ahead on Its 50th Birthday," December, 1953; "Flying in the 'Blowtorch' Era," September, 1950; "Our Air Age Speeds Ahead," February, 1948; and numerous articles listed under "Aviation" in the *Cumulative Index to the National Geographic Magazine*.

Alaska's Frozen Soil Gets Steamed up for an Open-Pit Gold Mine—Near Fairbanks, workmen connect hose to pipes through which steam will be shot to soften the ground. The dredge (background) will then move in to scoop up the pay dirt. Since 1867, when the United States bought Alaska from Russia, the far-north peninsula's gold alone has brought in fifty times Alaska's $7,200,000 cost.

AMOS BURG

UMI

Bulletin No. 4, January 18, 1954

Gold Rides the Sky Lanes

Gold, air-minded since transport planes began roaring through the skies, is still one of aviation's best customers. As air travel expands, the yellow metal continues to fly by night and by day.

In the years between two world wars, the airplane became an important factor in gold production. It flew tons of mining machinery across New Guinea's mountain ranges, where no road pierced primeval jungles. Over the snow-packed wilderness of northern Canada it shuttled with special equipment for extracting gold under arctic conditions.

Planes Give Speed and Protection—Besides filling this role of flying pack horse, the airplane of late has been cast with increasing frequency for the more glamorous job of taking the Midas metal on journeys from country to country. Some shipments still travel by train and ship, but planes have long proved safer as well as much faster.

Gold often changes owners without changing location. When it does move, ceremony befitting the monarch of metals attends it. On plane or train or ship, gold is a pampered passenger, always under special guard.

In the United States the main point of departure is the Federal Reserve Bank in New York City. A shipment to be flown abroad is crated in the bank's vaults. The 400-ounce ingots, the size and shape of an ordinary brick, are wrapped in Manila paper and packed in sawdust. Guards stand by while carpenters assemble the wooden boxes which prevent denting of the soft metal. An armored car whisks the gold to the airport. A ton of gold is worth about $1,100,000 at official prices. A four-motored plane can carry a load of six to seven tons.

Sky Is the Limit to Planes—Air transport requires fewer guards than ship or train, and there is less transshipment because planes can generally go all the way to the gold's destination. Loading and unloading involved in other travel add to the risks. This raises insurance costs.

Today the world is experiencing something like a "gold rush." The metal has been passing through Uncle Sam's fingers in goodly amounts, and at a brisk rate. In 1953 the Government, with well over $20,000,000,000 on hand, sold more than $1,140,000,000 abroad and didn't buy a penny's worth. Great Britain was the big purchaser, taking nearly half a billion dollars. Argentina, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Lebanon, Mexico, the Netherlands, and the Philippines also were in the market. Financiers say the sales show improved finances in many countries.

Although sales have been large, little gold has actually moved out of the United States. Great Britain, for instance, has large stocks in New York. A purchase by Britain thus merely means a shift from a United States to a British account. This is very much like writing a check to someone. He deposits it in his bank, increasing the amount of his account. The check writer's account is reduced by the same amount. Neither party actually handles any cash in the transaction.

Some Gold Travels in Person—But some gold actually does move. From March through October, $13,000,000 left Uncle Sam's vaults. The largest amount went to the Netherlands.

But central Europe is far from united, and its Iron Curtain has slammed down on much potential trade. The port, with the 285-square-mile Free Territory of Trieste, is further squeezed by cold war between Italy and Yugoslavia. With good ports of their own, neither rival has vital need of Trieste as an outlet for its goods. Yet both countries have been balking at any solution that would partition the boomerang-shaped Territory between them.

Trieste has had profitable years recently, but largely because of trade and industry temporary in nature. This boom, already dwindling, was due to heavy transshipment of Marshall Plan goods for Austria and to United States funds used to restore shipyard and port facilities, half of which had been destroyed in World War II bombing.

Divided for Seven Years—The Free Territory has led a split existence ever since the 1947 treaty with Italy created it. Under terms of the pact, 4,000 U. S. Army and 3,000 British troops have been stationed in Zone A. Their spending has been a bonanza for local merchants.

Although only a third of the Territory's total area, this northern zone has a population of some 240,000 Italians, largely concentrated in the city of Trieste, and 60,000 Slavs. Zone B, under Yugoslav military control, counts about 45,000 Slavs and 30,000 Italians, most of the latter in small coastal towns.

When plans were announced last fall for the Anglo-American forces to leave soon and turn Zone A over to the Italians, the Yugoslav chief of state, Marshal Tito (Josip Broz) threatened to invade that section. Now Allied troops seem pinned down there by simmering events.

Although an active port before the Christian era, Trieste's trade was largely localized until two centuries ago. A new chapter opened when Austria's Hapsburg government made it a free port in 1719.

The advent of railroads, steamships, and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 in turn worked to the port's advantage. By the turn of the 20th century the present Old Free Port was completed on reclaimed land on the city's north shore. A few years later the big New Free Port at the opposite end of the water front began to handle cargo.

Older Triestini recall the strong tide of commerce that flowed through their city prior to World War I. They sigh for a return to those prosperous years. Though Trieste even then was squeezed between Italo-Austrian rivalry, its corridor inland and its natural market region were all in one domain—the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

At the close of World War I Trieste became an Italian city. Fascist activity temporarily bolstered its declining traffic, which slumped further when Germany swallowed Austria and Czechoslovakia.

Modernized as well as restored, Trieste today is equipped to move a greater annual tonnage of cargo than ever before. But the cold war squeeze continues and its ancient Adriatic rivals remain on either side—Italian Venice and Yugoslav Rijeka (Fiume).

References—Trieste appears on the Society's map of Central Europe.
For additional information, see "Trieste—Still a Center of Tension," in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, April 2, 1951.

UMI

WIDE WORLD

Yugoslav Troops Brace for Inspection—And no wonder, they are under the stern eye of Marshal Tito, President of their nation, who rides by. The Anglo-American attempt to let Italy take over the section of partitioned Trieste protected by GI's and Tommies brought from Tito a threat to invade the zone. Yugoslavia is said to have the largest army on European soil west of the Iron Curtain. Estimates place the regular army at 300,000 to 400,000, with about twice as many trained reserves. Tito was born Josip Broz. Tito was his code name in World War II when he was directing guerrilla war on German forces. He has since made his last name Broz-Tito. A communist for many years, he balked at Yugoslavia's becoming a Soviet puppet after the war. The world was stunned when he broke with Moscow and decided to go it alone.

Bulletin No. 5, January 18, 1954

Trieste Problem Plagues Statesmen

Italians speak humorously of it as *Topolino*, or Mickey Mouse Land, because it is so small. Its correct name is the Free Territory of Trieste. Although only a fourth the size of Rhode Island, it ranks high on the top list of international problems to confront statesmen this year.

Both Italy and Yugoslavia lay claim to the Territory formed in 1947 as a result of World War II. Unrest, chronic from the start, reached a near-crisis stage toward the end of 1953. The thorny issues Trieste embodies may well make negotiators wish their sole worry was to solve questions for a comic-strip realm, such as the source of its nickname.

City Could Flourish—The troubled port is strategically located at the head of the Adriatic Sea, the arm of the Mediterranean which reaches farthest north into Europe. If the nations Trieste could serve were united in peace, it might prosper indefinitely.

Geographically, Trieste is a natural terminal for the sea-borne trade of Austria and much of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and southern Germany. Its position is comparable to that of New Orleans, through which funnels much of the world commerce of the vast region between the Appalachians and the Rockies in the United States.

(SEE BULLETIN NO. 3) NORBERT CASTERET

Ice Makes Glittering Sculptures in an Underground Cavern—The daughter of the discoverer of these ice caves in the Pyrenees stands spellbound at a spectacular subterranean formation. Her father believes the caves were carved by rivers during a warmer age aeons ago. As temperatures descended, the waters froze. Rain and snow seeped in to add more ice. Gradually a glacier formed inside the mountain.